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ABSTRACT

This study used repeated measures of the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) instrument to examine the change in student teacher orientation toward pupil control ideology occurring during a three semester field experience. The instrument was given to elementary and secondary education majors at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale five different times during the field experience, and attempted to address two research questions regarding: (1) the effect of participation at the different levels of the field experience on the student teachers' PCI scores; and (2) differences in PCI scores between the elementary and secondary education majors. Although the elementary education majors showed a significant decline in PCI scores during the first stage of the field experience, PCI scores for this group rose significantly by the end of the field experience. At any time during the field experience, secondary education majors had higher PCI scores than the elementary education majors. The document concludes that preservice teachers shift from a relatively humanistic ideology toward a more custodial view of children as they gain experience in the schools. Two pages of references are included. (CB)

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Preservice Students' Attitudes Toward Pupil Control as they Develop Throughout the Field Experiences

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Preservice Students' Attitudes Toward Pupil Control as they Develop Throughout the Field Experiences

INTRODUCTION

How can a teacher education program produce teachers who are trustful, accepting, and optimistic in their view of children? Perhaps the most appropriate step would be to keep them away from the real world of schools. Such is the dismal conclusion implied by the evidence that preservice students shift from a relatively humanistic ideology toward a more custodial view of children as they gain actual experience in the schools.

The development and extensive research use of the Pupil Control Ideology instrument (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1973) has allowed measurement and comparison of students' attitudes toward pupil control before and after student teaching as well as during the first few years of induction. But because extended early field experiences are relatively new requirements in most programs, there has been little attention to their role in the development of a novice's pupil control ideology. The present study followed the development of elementary and secondary students' attitudes toward pupil control over the course of a three-semester field experience.

BACKGROUND

The Pupil Control Ideology Instrument

The Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) measures the basic assumptions and ensuing attitudes of teachers and supervisors toward students on a continuum from custodial to humanistic. Schools in which the humanistic ideology predominates tend to have a strong sense of community; students' cooperation and interaction are essential. In schools where the custodial ideology predominates, students are not participants in the decision-making process; priorities are rigid control and maintenance of order (Sergiovanni, 1983).

The PCI consists of twenty-five point Likert-type items, each ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). Examples of items include the following: "It is desirable to require students to sit in assigned seats during assemblies" and "Pupils are usually not capable of solving their problems through logical reasoning." Possible scores on the instrument range from 0 to 100, with most actual scores falling between 45 and 65. Low scores are associated with a relatively humanistic ideology about students, while high scores are associated with a custodial ideology.

Corrected split-half reliabilities of .91 and .95 have been reported for the instrument, and its validity has been supported by evidence that it discriminates between teachers and schools

judged to be custodial or humanistic (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1973).

Research on Pupil Control Ideology During Field Experiences

Several areas of research using the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) are pertinent to the present study, particularly those whose findings suggest that elementary school teachers and field experience students are more humanistic in their pupil control ideology than their secondary counterparts (Hoy, 1967; Hoy, 1968; Jones, 1982). Willower and Lawrence (1979) provide support for a correlation between teacher-perceived threat to teacher status and PCI scores. Thus, secondary teachers, who perceive greater student threat to their status were also more likely to show greater custodialism in their pupil control ideology.

A few other studies address the question of what happens to PCI scores as a student teacher or teacher gains more experience. Most of this research compared PCI scores before and after the student teaching semester, though some measured PCI's into the first or second years of teaching. Willower (1975) summarized the repeated measures research as generally establishing that both student teaching and the first year of teaching result in increased levels of custodialism in pupil control ideology, and noted that the effect was less pronounced among teachers in primary grades.

He discussed the influence of the cooperating teacher and the task realities of the classroom as possible causes for the shift.

In a subsequent study, Hoy and Rees (1977) used the PCI and a measure of bureaucratic orientation to establish that secondary student teachers became more custodial as well as more bureaucratic over the course of a nine-week student teaching semester. Jones and Harty (1980) examined the correlation between post-student teaching PCI score and amount of engaged instructional activities. They concluded that the more time a student spent in teaching a class, the more custodial the student's PCI score became.

Research including early field experiences in the repeated measures research is sparse and recent. Harty and Anderson (1984) compared pre and post PCI scores for preservice elementary teachers with and without early field experiences and found that by the end of the semester, field-based students had more custodial PCI scores than their campus-based counterparts.

A longitudinal study reported by Paschal and Treloar (1979) provides the only contradiction to the generalization that custodialism increases with teaching experience. Elementary teachers completed the PCI instrument at five points: at the beginning of an ed psych course, the final of the ed psych course, the end of student teaching, the end of the first year of employment and the end of the second year. These researchers found that during the period of the campus course, the participants became more humanistic.

This shift reversed itself during the student teaching semester, but returned to the pre-ed psych level over the course of the three years of teaching.

The present study builds on several recommendations made by earlier researchers. It provides a longitudinal view of the development of pupil control ideology needed to balance the more prevalent cross-sectional explorations of socialization (Willower, 1975). It traces the development of secondary students and elementary students separately, in order to address some of the grade level differences in findings apparent in earlier research. Finally, the study addresses the need to add data about PCI development during the early field experiences to the existing body of research.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects were field experience students (FESs) affiliated with two teacher education centers at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. The FESs participated in a three-level experience, including two levels of early field experience (Levels I and II) and student teaching (Level III). Students at both Level I and Level II spent one-half day per week in a public school classroom for approximately 14 weeks. At the elementary level, an FES placed in a primary classroom for Level I was placed in an intermediate classroom for Level II and vice versa. At the secondary level, an

FES placed in a senior high classroom for Level I was placed in a junior high room for Level II. Level I was associated with a general methods class, while Level II was independent of a methods course. During Level III, FESs were full-time student teachers for 16 weeks. Typically, the Level III FESs returned to the same cooperating teacher with whom they had worked during the Level I experience.

Thirty-six FESs participated in the Level I field experience. Of this original group, twenty-one completed the sequence of Level I, Level II, and student teaching in one of the teacher education centers where the research was being conducted. Attrition resulted from a number of students leaving college, changing programs, delaying student teaching, or transferring to a different teacher education center. For the purposes of this longitudinal study, only complete data sets from the twenty-one students who took the PCI throughout the entire sequence were used.

The composition of the study's groups was typical of groups assigned to K-12 teacher education centers. The subjects included 11 elementary teachers and 10 secondary majors. The elementary group was predominantly female, while the secondary group was split evenly by male and female. Since effective cooperating teachers tend to be used repeatedly in the centers, most FESs were supervised by teachers who had had previous experience in working with field experience students.

Procedures

The study used repeated measures of the PCI instrument to examine the change in student teacher orientation toward pupil control ideology occurring during a three-semester field experience. The instrument was administered when students met as a full group for orientations or seminars at the following five points: the beginning of Level I, the end of Level I, the end of Level II, the middle of Level III, and the end of Level III.

The procedure addressed two research questions:

1. When elementary and secondary groups are analyzed separately, what is the effect of participation in each level of the field experience on the student teacher's PCI score?
2. Are there differences in PCI scores between the elementary and secondary groups at any or all of the points of administrations?

Data Analysis

PCI scores for the elementary group were analyzed separately from the secondary group. First, mean PCI scores at each administration point were tested for significant differences: Point 1 was compared with Point 2, Point 2 with Point 3, Point 3 with Point 4, Point 4 with Point 5, and Point 3 with Point 5. A two-tailed paired t-test was used for all comparisons.

The second analysis involved the comparison of mean PCI scores for elementary subjects with mean scores for secondary

subjects at each of the five administration points. Analysis of variance was used for all comparisons.

The surveys were scored in concurrence with the instructions of its developers, reversing the scoring of the two negatively weighted items so that high scores on all items reflected a tendency toward custodialism and low scores the tendency toward humanism.

FINDINGS

Effects of Field Experience Level

The first question addressed the effect of the various field experience levels on the development of the FESs pupil control ideology. Since earlier studies have indicated that there are significant differences between elementary and secondary teachers' PCI scores, groups were separated by grade level for data analysis.

Table 1 indicates that mean PCI scores for elementary student teachers declined significantly during the first level of the field experience, indicating that the elementary FESs became more humanistic during this period. For the secondary group, a statistically significant change from pre-Level I to post-Level I was not apparent.

Tables 2 through 4 indicate that no statistically significant shifts were apparent for either elementary or secondary groups at the following comparisons: Post Level I with post Level II, post

Level II and midterm of Level III, and midterm Level III with post Level III.

Table 5 compares scores from the beginning of the student teaching semester with those at the end of the student teaching experience. For the elementary group, PCI scores became significantly higher, i.e., more custodial, over the course of the semester, while for the secondary group, statistically significant differences were not apparent.

Effects of Grade Level

Table 6 compares mean PCI scores for the elementary FESs with those of secondary FESs at each of the five administration points. It indicates that at three of the points mean PCI scores were significantly higher for secondary FESs: At the end of Level I, the end of Level II, and the end of Level III. Thus, at each of these points, secondary students' PCI scores were more custodial than their elementary counterparts'.

At the two other points of administration, pre-Level I and midterm Level III, no statistically significant differences were apparent between groups.

DISCUSSION

Effects of Field Experience Level

Table 7 provides a linear graph of the trends that occurred for both groups over the course of the three semesters of the field experiences.

Research from previous studies has been almost unanimous in reporting that preservice students become more custodial over the course of student teaching. This generalization is supported in the present study for the elementary group, but while an upward trend is apparent for the secondary sample, this shift was not statistically significant.

Findings on the two early field experiences cannot be viewed from the perspective of previous research because longitudinal studies have not included these data. The present data indicate that elementary FESs became more humanistic over the course of their first field experience, leveled out during the second field experience and then shifted back to the more custodial level during their student teaching semester. The same trend, though not statistically significant in the latter case, is apparent for the secondary FESs.

Some insight about this reversal may be gained by considering the nature of each field experience. During Level I, the FES was concurrently taking a campus methods course whose content included planning and strategies for instruction and classroom management. Instructors teaching such courses generally emphasize psychological foundations for classroom management techniques. Also, because the instructors are not longer teaching in the public schools, it can be assumed that their personal and espoused pupil control ideologies would be relatively humanistic, typical of those who

are less directly responsible for client control (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1973). In combination, the course content and platform of its instructor may serve to modify the impressionable FES toward a more humanistic PCI.

In addition, when Level I students were observing in the schools, they probably felt a certain sense of security in that they were gradually inducted into the instructional process, had little responsibility for pupils' progress or behavior and were rarely left alone with the pupils. While responsibilities gradually increased for most FESs during Level II, the fact that observations occurred for only one half day per week precluded much intensive involvement in the planning and management of the classroom.

Level III presented a marked contrast. During this semester, most students had little contact with campus. They quickly assumed responsibility for pupils' instruction and behavior and were often left alone with their pupils. Since the opportunity for teacher-perceived threat was clearly greater, as Willower and Dennis note (1979), they may well have experienced corresponding shifts toward greater custodialism in their attitudes toward pupils.

What seems most provocative in the current data is that the shift toward custodialism during the student teaching semester was more in the nature of a pendulum returning to its former height than a one-directional increase. The attitudes about pupil

control the students held early in the program seemed to be "homing" points to which they returned after the countereffects of the campus courses and the perceived threat of the classroom.

Effects of Grade Level

The graph on Table 7 indicates that secondary students' mean PCIs were descriptively higher than their elementary counterparts' at all levels. These differences were statistically significant at the end of Level I, the end of Level II, and the end of Level III. These data support the findings of earlier researchers that elementary school teachers and student teachers are more humanistic in their pupil control ideology than their secondary counterparts and extend this generalization into the early field experiences.

Willower and Lawrence (1979) provide a comprehensive discussion of the factors in schools that may affect the differences in the "perceived threat" at each level and thus the correspondingly higher PCIs for the secondary students. These factors include the size and maturity of students, the greater diversity of subcultures and subject-oriented nature of secondary schools, the difference in parental concerns, as well as the dissimilar proportions of male and female in the proportions of the teachers themselves.

The PCI differences between elementary and secondary students are but one dimension of the different profiles for the two groups. There is substantial evidence that elementary and secondary

students enter their field experiences with different reasons, expectations and attitudes. Even before their first field experience, elementary FESs tend to be more child-centered than their secondary peers. The secondary students, on the other hand, more frequently report the attraction of their subject area in their decision to teach. These differences persist in FESs descriptions of their expectations for their field experiences and is later evident in the types of activities reported as significant and in which they voluntarily engage (Killian & McIntyre, 1986). With such differences in orientation toward clientele and subject matter apparent at all phases, it seems to follow that corresponding differences in pupil control ideology would be apparent also.

Suggestions for Future Research

As a result of the attrition in the original sample size, findings in this study were based upon a smaller number than is statistically desirable. The study is currently being replicated with a larger sample. Additional studies with samples from other institutions, particularly those with a differently structured field experience sequence, are needed to establish whether the current finding will be duplicated in other settings.

Additionally, extending the data collection points earlier into the undergraduate program and later into the teaching careers of participants would help to determine the stability of PCI scores over an extended period of time in a student's life when a

number of variables may well be affecting the individual's attitudes toward pupils.

Future research would also be enhanced by attention to the context in which these shifts in pupil control ideology occur. Interviews, journals, tapes of seminar discussions and other such rich records of students' thoughts may all help to provide insight into the reason for students' changing attitudes toward their clientele.

If future research lends credence to the present finding that when elementary and secondary groups are considered separately, PCI's tend to return to pre-field experience levels by the end of student teaching, perhaps teacher educations can be less worried about the negative effects that student teaching will have on the values they try to promote. If pupil control ideology is relatively impervious to either the influences of campus or field, then it is the ideology that the prospective teacher brings with him that becomes crucial to the kind of teacher he will become.

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Table 1

A Comparison of Mean PCI Scores Before and After Level I

Grade Level	n	$\bar{X}$ Before Level I	$\bar{X}$ After Level I	Standard Deviation	t
Elementary	11	49.6	40.4	8.30	2.92*
Secondary	10	55.7	56.1	7.02	-.16

*$p < .05$

Table 2

A Comparison of Mean PCI Scores Before and After Level II

Grade Level	n	$\bar{X}$ Before Level II	$\bar{X}$ After Level II	Standard Deviation	t
Elementary	11	42.4	43.1	5.52	-.44
Secondary	10	53.1	52.6	6.98	.23

Table 3

A Comparison of Mean PCI Scores during the First Half of Student Teaching

Grade Level	n	$\bar{X}$ After Level II	$\bar{X}$ at Midterm of Student Teaching	Standard Deviation	t
Elementary	11	43.1	47.5	7.16	-2.02
Secondary	10	52.6	54.4	6.07	-.94

Table 4

A Comparison of Mean PCI Scores during the Second Half of Student Teaching

Grade Level	n	$\bar{X}$ After Level II	$\bar{X}$ at Midterm of Student Teaching	Standard Deviation	t
Elementary	11	47.5	47.0	5.07	.30
Secondary	10	54.4	54.9	5.38	-.29

Table 5

A Comparison of Mean PCI Scores Pre- and Post-Student Teaching

Grade Level	n	$\bar{X}$ After Level II	$\bar{X}$ after Student Teaching	Standard Deviation	t
Elementary	11	43.1	47.0	5.80	-2.23*
Secondary	10	52.6	54.9	5.01	-1.45

*$p < .05$

Table 6

A Comparison of Mean PCI Scores at 5 Administration Points by Grade Level

Administration Point	$\bar{X}$ for Elementary (n=11)	S. Dev.	$\bar{X}$ for Elem Secondary (n=10)	S. Dev.	F	Lev of SIG
Pre Level I	49.6	9.6	55.7	4.4	2.35	.15
Post Level I	44.3	7.6	53.1	6.4	7.50	.01**
Post Level II	45.1	4.9	52.6	6.0	8.80	.01**
Mid Level III	48.8	7.7	54.4	6.3	3.18	.09
Post Level III	47.0	9.2	54.9	6.8	4.90	.04*

*p < .05

**p < .01

Table 7

PCI Scores for Elementary and Secondary Field Experience Students